

Sixth Annual Housing Institute

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**"Moving Forward Together...Finding
Collaborative Solutions In Permanent
Supportive Housing."**



Role, Duties, & Responsibilities of the Housing Specialist

Presented by

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History of Housing Specialist Position

Lessons learned from AB 2034 and FSP

- Housing Services are an essential treatment component
- Safe affordable housing is key to recovery



SAMHSA Announces New Definition of Recovery

- A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.
- Four major dimensions that support a life in Recovery:
 - Health
 - Home - A stable and safe place to live
 - Purpose
 - Community



Role of the Housing Specialist

- Countywide Housing Specialists
 - Receives Referrals from DMH Clinics in the Service Area
- Housing Coordinators for Contracted Agencies
 - Receives Referrals from Agency Case Managers
- Treatment Team Member Specializing in Housing
 - Full Service Partnerships



Duties of the Housing Specialist

General Categories of Duties:

- Assists consumers with locating and obtaining housing
- Assists consumers with maintaining housing
- Participates as mental health team member
- Develops housing resources in the community



Assists Consumers with Locating and Obtaining Housing

- Conducts Housing Assessment
 - Housing History
 - Financial Situation
 - Transportation
 - Criminal Convictions
 - Independent Living Supports/Assistance Needed



Assists Consumers with Locating and Obtaining Housing (cont.)

Works with Consumer to Develop Housing Plan

SHORT TERM

- Identifies Funding Sources & Resources

LONG TERM

- Assists in resolving legal history barriers (e.g. warrants, expungement)



Assists Consumers with Locating and Obtaining Housing (cont.)

- Gathers required documents such as identification, social security cards, bank statements
- Accompanies/transportes the consumer to all necessary related appointments as requested
- Educates consumers about available housing resources and assistance in the community
- Determines and certifies eligibility for federal, state and locally funded housing programs by verifying income, assets and other financial data



Assists Consumers with Locating and Obtaining Housing (cont.)

- Assists with compiling and assessing eligibility information in compliance with housing regulations
- Provides referrals to appropriate housing resources
- Assists with completion of applications for rental subsidies such as Homeless Section 8 and Shelter Plus Care or the Housing Assistance Program
- Assists with preparing for interviews with Housing Authority, managers and property owners (e.g. mock interviews)



Assists Consumers with Locating and Obtaining Housing (cont.)

- Assists in the housing search process
- Educates individuals about tenant rights and responsibilities
- Advocates and negotiates for clients with poor credit and poor housing histories (i.e. evictions or lack of housing tenancy)
- Assists with move-in



Assists Consumers with Maintaining Housing

- Ensures consumer is connected to on-going mental health supports
- Advocates for clients with landlords
- Averts possible evictions by addressing any concerns by the property owners and managers
- Liaison between landlord and consumer and mental health team



Participates as Mental Health Team Member

- Provides information, training and technical assistance to team members regarding the housing resources in the community
- Accepts housing assistance referrals from team
- Works with team to obtain information for housing applications such as documentation of disability



Participates as Mental Health Team Member

- Informs team of consumer progress in meeting housing goals
- Informs team of any observed or landlord/manager reported difficulties consumer is experiencing in the housing including:
 - the need for additional supports
 - crisis intervention
 - medication evaluation



Develops Resources in the Community

- Conducts outreach to property owners and managers to:
 - Develop potential housing resources
 - Provide education about mental illness to reduce any associated stigma
 - Increase the availability of housing opportunities in the fair market



Develops Resources in the Community

- Researches housing resources and develops community specific housing resource directory
- Liaison to Countywide Housing, Employment and Education Resource Development (CHEERD)
- Represents agency/program at Service Area and countywide housing related meetings



Housing Specialists Presenters

Marquis Wilson, B.A. San Fernando Valley Community
Mental Health Center, Inc.

Faye Williams, ENKI Health and Research Systems Inc.

Carol Phillips, Department of Mental Health, Service Area 4
Administration

